



# Chambers's Journal

## SIXTH SERIES.

### WOMEN AND EXERCISE.

By ERNEST W. LOWE.



WHEN we remember that only a very few years ago it was thought unladylike, if not absolutely indelicate, for a girl to go in for any form of exercise more violent than croquet, it is not very surprising that public opinion upon the subject is still in an unsettled condition. The last few years have indeed witnessed very remarkable changes. Our girls to-day are permitted to enjoy practically the same privileges as their brothers; they cycle, row, play tennis and cricket and hockey, and society looks on and utters approval. To raise the question of 'propriety' in connection with exercise for women is to stamp one's self as hopelessly behind the times. It is true that people do exist who, hide-bound by tradition, still eye askance the healthy, wholesome-minded girl who by means of judicious exercise keeps in glowing health, and who sigh for the sickly, pallid creature of a generation or so back, who mainly occupied her time in 'crewl-work,' and could always summon up a timely 'swoon' when she desired to awaken masculine interest. But these good folk constitute but a trifling minority; and in considering the subject on broad lines, their opinion, however interesting to the student as a survival of a bygone day, need not be taken into serious consideration.

On the other hand, it is idle to deny that, though the vast majority of people have only one opinion with regard to the propriety of women indulging in athletic exercises, there is a great divergence of opinion as to whether the modern trend is expedient or the reverse. Roughly speaking, people are divided into two classes—those who contend that athletic exercises are beneficial to women, and those who hold a directly opposite opinion. There are the staunch upholders of exercise for women, and those who are never weary of decrying it. A great deal of nonsense is talked on both sides, and a great deal of harm done, as is

always the case when expression is freely given to opinions which are not the result of careful and impartial investigation. The 'fors' are enthusiastic in declaring that all and every sort of exercise is good for women; such minor matters as to whether it is suitable or unsuitable, and whether, if suitable, it be taken in a proper manner and with due attention being paid to the laws of health, are beneath their consideration. The 'againsts' content themselves with denouncing the whole thing—lock, stock, and barrel; they tell us that athletic exercise is not only physically harmful to a girl, and tends to make her mannish and awkward, and unfitted for the duties of motherhood, but that it has a very deleterious effect upon her mental, moral, and spiritual nature, and if persisted in will inevitably result in coarsening her nature and destroying all the qualities which have ever been woman's chiefest pride and charm!

It is a terrible indictment; and were there any justification for it, it would undoubtedly furnish a very sufficient reason for the girls of to-day giving up exercise once and for all, and going back to the ways of their grandmothers. But, of course, it is simply a gross exaggeration, due to the constitutional inability of those who hold it to draw a logical deduction from evidence. Unfortunately many otherwise intelligent and cultivated people are in this plight. Only the other day we had the woeful spectacle of a lady-doctor of many years' experience writing an article in a leading review, first postulating that our women were going to the bad in every way, and then endeavouring to show that this was a direct consequence of the spread of bicycling. Between the two sets of opinions—the one refusing to see any drawbacks, the other unable to recognise any advantages—it is by no means astonishing that the rationale of exercise is as yet very imperfectly understood by the majority of women who pursue it in some shape or form. The pity of it is that each of the factions has some reason on its side—

reason which is almost entirely obscured by the violence of their feeling. If they could only come together—if each could be got to give some measure of tolerance to the other—much permanent good might result.

During the last couple of years the writer has had unique opportunities of observing the effects of judicious exercise upon women; and the result of his observations may be interesting. The word 'judicious' is used advisedly; presently he will have something to say about exercise wrongly and excessively pursued. Let it at once be said that as a beautifier of the feminine form and face exercise stands by itself. The benefits conferred by it upon the modern young women of the middle and upper classes are almost incalculable. One has only to look around to become convinced of it. The young women of to-day are finer to look at, straighter, taller, more wholesome-looking, than were those of thirty years ago. In the case of the individual the results of proper and well-regulated exercise are no less striking. A few months will make a vast difference. The girl who formerly was lackadaisical and languid—never absolutely ill, perhaps, but at the same time never entirely well, always suffering from some trifling ailment, which made her and every one with whom she came into contact miserable—becomes literally a 'new woman.' The wheel, the tennis-court, and the river speedily cause such things as 'nerves' to take their departure. Her blood circulates more freely; her organs do their work as they were meant to do it; she is carrying out the scheme designed by Nature, and she begins to learn what it is really to live. She has begun to learn that the first essential to good looks is health, and that one cannot have health without exercise, and plenty of it. The notion that physical exercise is detrimental to feminine beauty of form and grace of movement is absolutely erroneous. It is constantly said, 'Oh, a woman doesn't want to be physically strong; a muscular woman is an abomination.' If by muscle is meant large and badly distributed masses, there is little fault to be found with the statement. On the other hand, well-developed and symmetrical muscles are absolutely essential if a woman desires to have the grace of outline, the roundness of limb, the pliancy and suppleness of movement which are so universally and justly admired. You cannot have grace and ease without strength; the prettily-built woman is almost invariably strong and active. Indeed, grace and ease are the very refinements of strength. If we look at, say, the arm of a finely-built woman, we do not, of course, wish to see huge masses of muscle. What we expect to see, and what pleases our eye in the seeing, is the exquisite modelling, the flowing lines, and the soft yet firm appearance of the flesh. And all that mainly depends upon the condition of the muscles underneath. Looking from a distance at such an arm, we know in-

tuively that, soft as it looks, it will be firm to the touch; we know that were the muscles flabby and toneless, though the limb might please a certain order of eye by reason of its size and fleshiness, the exquisite modelling, the wonderful blending of daintiness and power, would be lacking. And what is true of the arm is equally so of the whole feminine form. It is the peculiar quality of exercise that *it tends to emphasise* *sex*; while it makes a man more virile, causes his muscles to stand out, and gives him a more determined appearance, it causes the female form to become rounder, the outlines softer, and, in short, makes her more womanly-looking in every way.

'Womanly-looking,' it may be echoed; but does it make her more womanly in character? Well, that is a very wide subject, and one which it would be futile to argue at any great length. Still, it may be said that, as exercise leads to health, the woman who takes exercise is naturally the healthy woman. And is there any good reason for supposing that the healthy woman is likely, *by reason of her health*, to be inferior in character and disposition to her weaker sister? On the contrary, health has an enormous bearing upon the mental and moral qualities, and especially in the case of women. Is not the woman who is overflowing with health likely to have better spirits, to have more large-minded tolerance, to be gentle and more considerate than the feeble creature who is always wrapped up in her own sickly body? It is frequently asserted that the girl who goes in for exercise is overbearing and assertive. Do we usually find those undesirable qualities in the strong? Certainly common experience does not bear out the contention.

Those who are strongly opposed to exercise for women may contend that what has been said with regard to its effects is inaccurate, and in proof of their assertion point to many girls who undoubtedly *do* take exercise, but who are far from being pleasant to gaze upon. They may point to the 'bicycle face,' the angular figure, the strained, weary expression, the awkward gait, and exclaim triumphantly, 'Behold the results of this much-vaunted panacea for all the ills of womanhood!' The writer's reply is that he has been referring to judicious exercise, as he was at pains to point out. It is undeniable that many girls do come to harm through pursuing exercise in a rash and injudicious manner; but this is no argument against exercise itself. It merely shows how great is the necessity for pointing out that exercise, however good in itself, may be responsible for much harm to such of its devotees as pursue it indiscreetly and without due recognition of the fundamental laws of health and life itself.

It is not necessary for a woman to be a profound physiologist to understand that exercise if

carried to excess defeats its own object. Yet it is upon this side that the modern girl is most apt to err. That is, indeed, what is to be expected. Exercise is so comparatively new a thing to women that they cannot be expected to see it all at once in its proper perspective. Men, it must always be remembered, have grown up with a tradition of physical exercise behind them. No doubt in time it will become a tradition with women; but the present generation is only just beginning it. Again, boys begin at a very early age to participate in games and sports, and thus by the time they come to adolescence their frames are hardened, their muscles toughened, their hearts and lungs in good working order, and able to stand a good deal of strain without serious injury. Now, if girls wish to properly benefit by exercise they must take a leaf out of their brothers' book. *Festina lente* must, in fact, be their motto. It is owing to the neglect of this maxim that girls very frequently get more harm than good out of their exercise. Women in general have a greater amount of what—for want of a better name—we call nervous energy than have men; this leads them very frequently to overtax their strength. While under the influence of excitement, or the feeling born of good-natured rivalry, they will attempt, and very frequently succeed in accomplishing, feats out of all proportion to their strength, without having worked up to them by a graduated course of training such as would be undergone by a man in similar circumstances. The result is that they are making a great drain upon their nervous system; and, after the spurious strength born of excitement and the desire not to be outstripped passes off, collapse and nervous prostration follow. On many occasions the writer has been told by lady friends, to whom he has dilated upon the virtues of the bicycle, for instance, 'Oh yes. Dr So-and-so recommended me to try it when I was very run down and out of sorts. But it didn't agree with me; in fact, it only made my headaches worse, and after a day's riding I was unfit for anything the next. So I gave it up.' In almost every case investigation revealed the same state of affairs, the facts, indeed, being curiously similar. None of the ladies who thus complained of the bicycle had ever given it a fair trial. Had they tried rowing, tennis, or any other form of exercise, they would almost to a certainty have had the same tale to tell. Here is a typical instance. The lady in question had only been riding a few months, and after learning rarely got on her machine more than once a week, sometimes not for a fortnight; and yet she told me complacently—be it remembered she was by no means strong, and originally took up the bicycle as a means of improving her health—that she had done fifty or sixty miles in a day, and felt none the worse for it! Probably not at the time; but the headaches and general 'done-up-

ness' next day were fully accounted for. She had ridden with a party of friends—several of whom were of the sterner sex—and her anxiety not to give in had led her to overtax her strength. This tendency on the part of women to overdo it, not to recognise their limitations, is one which is responsible for much evil; and if exercise is to be beneficial it is necessary for women to study the ways of men who have grown up with a tradition of exercise. A 'varsity oar or runner who has been 'out of condition' for a few months, when he commences to 'get fit' again only sets about it very gradually; for a week or two he limits himself to quite light work, and is careful not to overtax himself. Yet a girl who has probably never taken any exercise worth speaking of in her life until she began to ride a bicycle, thinks she is quite fit to go for long spins directly she knows how to mount and dismount!

Another point in which women are woefully lacking is that their ideas are very hazy with regard to the hygiene of exercise. To touch upon one matter—and a very important matter, too—that of the bath. Every male athlete knows the value of the 'order of the bath.' After a bicycle ride, a race, a bout with the gloves, or what not, a man's first idea is 'a bath and change.' Indeed, to the male mind the notion of vigorous exercise without a subsequent bath is exceedingly uninviting. All the laws of health and cleanliness demand it; and yet by far the greater majority of women do not realise this. The average girl will play tennis under a hot summer sun all the afternoon, or come in from a long and dusty bicycle ride, and never dream of doing more than change her blouse, bathe her hands and face, and 'straighten her hair.' As this is a journal for the lay reader, I do not want to enlarge unduly upon this topic; but, without going into details, is it not obvious that the advantages of the exercise are often more than counterbalanced by the effects of sitting for hours in clothes which must be soaked in perspiration? Not to mention the danger of colds and things more serious, this in itself is ample to account for the tired, headachy feeling so many women experience after exercise, and which does not wear off even after they have rested.

What is really required is that girls should be brought up to exercise from their early years as are their brothers, so that when they grow up they are not tempted through ignorance to indulge in it to an excessive extent or in a form which is likely to be harmful. This would, of course, be an ideal state of things; but even when a girl has grown up almost entirely unaccustomed to exercise, much might be done to obviate the evils which undoubtedly do exist in connection with it. Many a girl who is at present quite unfit to ride a bicycle, to play tennis, or in fact

to undertake any form of vigorous exercise, might be made quite capable of doing any of these things by a few months spent in careful attention to physical culture—to the getting of the body and the organs into fit condition for active work. This could be very easily attained by a half-hour daily spent in doing movements designed to exercise every part of the body, either with light dumb-bells or even by simply going through properly regulated movements with the body and limbs. They should be done under the supervision of a competent teacher, who would graduate the work to the physical capacity of the pupil, and keep a watchful eye to see she was not overtasking herself. Most forms of exercise are apt to be one-sided. Thus the bicycle exercises the legs and little else (of course it is exceedingly good because of the facilities it offers for getting into the fresh air); in tennis the right hand and arm is greatly

used, and the left practically neglected; and so on. For some strange reason, the one perfect and easily-got-at exercise is not in favour with women nowadays—namely, walking. But one is glad to see that ladies have taken up golf with so much enthusiasm. In the vicinity of most of our large towns and holiday resorts they may be seen following the ball as keenly as their masculine friends. Hockey or shinty is also played by girls. What the writer is anxious to impress upon women is, that before going in for a specific form of exercise they should endeavour to get themselves what an athlete calls 'generally fit;' and this is best attained by means of a properly regulated course of dumb-bells or calisthenics. If they will do this, and bear in mind what has been said on the subject of moderating their zeal, not forgetting that invaluable bath, I am quite sure that in a few years the opponents of exercise for women will be silenced.

## OF ROYAL BLOOD.

### A STORY OF THE SECRET SERVICE.

#### CHAPTER IV.—THE FACE AND THE MASK.



CABINET Council had been summoned to decide some important affair of State; therefore my interview with Lord Macclesfield was a brief one. As usual, he was grave and courteous, sitting in his large

padded writing-chair, his thin white hands clasped upon the table before him, his keen dark eyes fixed upon me.

'I wished to see you once more before you leave, Crawford, in order to give you a word of final advice in the matter you are about to undertake. The affair, from later despatches, appears to be much more serious than I had at first believed. It will require the greatest care and judgment. We have enemies in Brussels—secret enemies, you understand; and if report be true, they are the most daring and unscrupulous set with whom we have yet had to deal. Have you thought over the matter well?'

'Yes,' I answered. 'I have recollected every word you spoke to me when you entrusted the secret to my keeping.'

'And you now feel yourself quite competent to undertake the task?'

'Entirely so,' I said. 'You may rely upon me doing my best.'

'You are not married, I presume?' he asked suddenly, with a quick penetrating glance.

'No,' I laughed.

'Are you likely to be?'

'Well,' I responded, with a smile, 'truth to tell, I have not yet found a woman for whom I should care as wife.'

'Quite right, quite right,' he answered testily.

'It's a mistake for any young diplomatist to marry—a grave mistake. He should be free—entirely free. You are free; therefore you have every chance of succeeding.'

'I shall strive my utmost.'

'Both Russia and France have clever representatives at the Belgian Court; therefore you will be compelled to act with considerable tact. But I rely on you. Matters have become so serious that it is better for you to leave at once for Brussels and take up your position at the embassy. I have instructed Sir John Drummond to allow you to have an absolutely free hand, both as regards time and expense; and from time to time you will report direct to me by special messenger. Trust nothing to the post, for we already have evidence that the *cabinet noir* is active.'

I nodded acquiescence.

'And before you leave,' the Premier added, 'you had better see Clunes, of the Treaty Department. Yesterday, in conversation with me upon another matter, he made a statement which is very extraordinary, and appears to have some connection with the mystery you are about to fathom.'

'Clunes!' I ejaculated in surprise. 'What has he discovered?'

'You had better hear his statement, for the information may, or may not, be of use to you. At any rate, the story is an astounding one, and, if true, shows the extraordinary ingenuity of our enemies.'

'You have doubts as to its veracity?' I suggested.

His eyes fell upon the blotting-pad before him,

and for a few seconds he appeared deep in thought.

'Truth to tell, Crawford,' he said at last in a tone of confidence, 'I am wondering whether the strange allegation was not made to me with some ulterior motive.'

'But you don't suspect that Clunes, a trusted servant in that department where secrecy is so imperative, would willingly mislead you?' I asked.

His lordship shook his head doubtfully.

'Recollect,' he added quickly, 'this matter is entirely between us. I do not know whether or not you are a friend of Clunes'; but if you are, then recollect that you are before everything the servant of your Queen and country, just as I am, and that private friendships or prejudices must never be allowed to interfere with duty.'

'Then what do you wish me to do?' I asked.

'See Clunes this evening, obtain his statement, and on arrival in Brussels report to me your opinion regarding its truth.'

'Very well,' I answered, not, however, pleased at this prospect. His lordship's suspicion of Gordon unsettled me, for I had always found him a true and faithful friend. What, I wondered, had he discovered, and what could be the nature of this extraordinary statement which might throw some light upon the matter I was about to investigate? If anything of importance had come to his knowledge, it was strange, knowing that I had been appointed on a secret mission, that, friends as we were, he had not given me the benefit of his knowledge. I scarcely suspected him of endeavouring to curry favour with his lordship, except that, on account of his wife's eagerness that he should obtain a post abroad, he might have been induced by her to make a bold bid for fortune. I recollected that this woman he had married was my secret and most bitter enemy. Perhaps she was endeavouring to use her husband as a tool for my downfall.

My teeth closed tightly as I recollected that look of triumph in her eyes.

Then, with a final adieu to his lordship, who had already risen and put on his hat to attend the meeting of the Cabinet, I went out and downstairs to Gordon's room.

On entering I found him absent, but one of the clerks informed me that a telegram had been received that morning saying that he was indisposed, and would not attend that day. I was annoyed at this, as it meant that I should be compelled to travel down to Richmond, and there again meet the hateful woman who held my future in her unscrupulous hands.

As I left my friend's room I ran up against one of my whilom colleagues, Jack Carmichael, and with him walked round to the St James's Club to lunch. He was an easy-going bachelor of thirty-five, who never took life very seriously; and as we sat over our coffee in the smoking-room

he gossiped on, telling me all the news of the *personnel* of the Foreign Office during the past couple of years: how young Carew had gone the pace, got into the hands of the Jews, and been compelled to resign; how Bramford, the younger son of a well-known peer, had died of alcoholic poisoning; how old Black, the passport-clerk, had retired on a pension; and how kind Lady Macclesfield had been to the family of old Saddington, the messenger and hall-porter, who had died of bronchitis after forty years of service. These and other things he related, all of them interesting to me, for in the days before my nomination as attaché abroad I had, I believe, been rather popular among my colleagues. At least they had made me a very handsome presentation when I had left them for more important duties.

'And Clunes has taken to himself a wife,' I remarked when he had finished.

My companion shrugged his shoulders expressively.

'Why?' I asked.

'A wife!' and he smiled again.

'But surely she is his wife,' I exclaimed. I knew Gordon to be the soul of honour.

'Certainly,' answered Carmichael; 'but she's not the sort of woman I'd care to marry, old chap.'

'Why?' I inquired, instantly interested.

'Least said soonest mended, you know,' he answered vaguely.

'But tell me,' I urged.

'No,' he responded. 'It isn't fair to gossip about a pal's wife. He's your friend and mine, remember.'

'Of course,' I said. 'Nevertheless I've met her, and I also have suspicions that they are not quite so happy as people imagine.'

'Oh yes, they're happy enough,' he answered. 'Gordon's far happier than most men who forge the matrimonial fetters. Thank Heaven! although I've had my periods of sentimental silliness, I've never so far played the giddy ass as to marry.'

'Nor I,' I observed. 'But neither of us is an old man yet. We both might fall in love.'

Jack Carmichael pulled a wry face, as though such a prospect was nauseous. But he was always joking, and one never knew whether or not to take him quite seriously.

'If I married,' he said after a pause, 'I'd rather marry a washerwoman than an unknown foreigner, as Gordon did.'

'A foreigner! Surely she's not a foreigner—is she?'

'Yes. But Heaven alone knows what her nationality really is. She speaks English well, and passes as an Englishwoman,' he replied. 'I stood as Gordon's best-man at the wedding, and it was at the wedding luncheon that I first detected that she wasn't English.'

'How?'

'She was excited, having drunk an unusual quantity of fizz, and once or twice she dropped into a foreign accentuation of certain words. Gordon never seemed to have noticed it, strangely enough.'

'Then perhaps her maiden name was a false one?' I suggested, all these facts only serving to verify the suspicion I had from the first moment entertained of her.

'Her name was Judith Carter-Harrison, but heaven knows whether it was an assumed name or not,' he answered. 'Since their marriage I've been a frequent visitor at Richmond; and once, when I was alone with her, I carefully led up to the subject of foreign birth and education. She, however, strenuously evaded giving me direct answers to my questions, and seemed extremely annoyed that I should entertain any suspicion that she was other than she had represented herself to be.'

'Strange,' I remarked—'very strange. She is, of course, extremely good-looking.'

'I should rather think so. When Gordon takes her to the theatre she's always the centre of attraction. Her face is almost flawless in its beauty.'

'And poor old Gordon is so blindly infatuated that he has not yet discovered that she has deceived him,' I said, with a sigh. 'Some day, I fear, he will suddenly awaken to the truth, and then the blow will fall heavily upon him.'

'Yes,' my friend replied. 'He's such an excellent fellow that I can't help feeling sorry for him. Truth to tell, I believe the chief does not give him his promotion solely because of this foolish marriage.'

'Does Lord Macclesfield know her?' I gasped.

'I'm not certain,' he responded. 'But I have a vague suspicion that he does.'

I held my breath in alarm. If that were so, then I knew not from one moment to another when she might go to him and relate the ghastly story which I had ever striven to hide—a secret which, if exposed, would ruin me irretrievably. His lordship's remarkable words regarding the fidelity of Clunes himself recurred to me, and I became pensive, plunged in gloomy apprehension.

That being my last day in London, I made several calls during the afternoon, and it was about five o'clock, and already dark, when I entered the train at Waterloo for Richmond.

What Carmichael had told me caused me considerable uneasiness. That my old chum Gordon should marry an adventuress seemed extremely improbable; yet I could not forget that her face was quite familiar to me. There was but one way to silence her, I reflected. That I feared her I willingly admit; still, when I thought calmly and weighed each fact carefully, I saw that the look of terror I had noticed in her eyes was not altogether without reason. Her attitude when I had visited her on the last occasion had been one of watchfulness. She apparently desired

to see whether I recognised her, or whether I intended to speak to her husband upon her striking resemblance to that woman I had once known. Yet I had made no sign; therefore she had smiled in confidence and triumph when she had uttered the one name most hateful to me.

In that journey to Richmond, stifled in a compartment overcrowded by City men eagerly returning to their homes at Barnes, Mortlake, and Teddington, and that new suburb Fulwell, I reflected deeply. If ever man was desperate I was at that moment. Before me I had a secret mission which, if successfully accomplished, would no doubt result in my further advancement. For a young man I had made rapid strides; but this woman stood as a menace between myself and success. Well I knew her ingenuity, her craftiness; the calm cunning and the relentless revenge of which she was capable. She was indeed a formidable enemy.

Nevertheless it likewise tardily occurred to me that although she held my secret, yet I also held the key to her disreputable past. Could I not, if she uttered a single word, expose her in her true light as an adventuress, a woman *declassée* and beyond the pale of society, an infamous schemer whose real name stank in the nostrils of every one in two European capitals? This I saw was my only safeguard. She was now awaiting her chance to expose my true office, and to bring not only me but British diplomacy into derision and render it ignominious; therefore I realised that it was incumbent upon me to strike the first blow. I sat in the railway carriage pretending to read the evening paper, but really trying to decide how to act. The best and wisest course appeared to be to recognise her at once, pretend to hold her in abhorrence, and threaten to explain all to her husband. Then she in turn would threaten me, whereupon I could proceed to make advantageous terms with her. This seemed the only course; therefore, after due consideration, I decided to adopt it.

A neat maid answered my summons when I rang, and I was at once ushered into the white drawing-room which I had so admired on my first visit. Then, after a few minutes, she entered, rather flurried, I thought. She was confused at my unexpected call, and this gave me courage.

'I've come down to see Gordon on business,' I explained when we had exchanged greetings and she had taken a seat opposite me.

'He was not at all well this morning, poor boy, so I persuaded him not to go to town,' she explained.

'What's the matter with him?' I asked, concerned.

'Nothing,' she answered quickly. 'A slight headache, that's all. He's very subject to headaches, occasioned, I suppose, by overwork. Lord Macclesfield ought to give him an assistant. It's really too bad.'

She spoke the truth. The duties in the Treaty Department were always very onerous and heavy. He had several times complained to me in his letters that further assistance was absolutely necessary.

'And you are very devoted to him?' I said suddenly, my gaze fixed severely upon her.

She started quickly. I saw a look of terror in her blue eyes. Her brows instantly contracted.

'Devoted to him? Of course I am. What do you mean?' she asked, with affected hauteur.

'It is useless to feign ignorance,' I said quickly. 'Recollect that we are not strangers, Judith.'

'No,' she answered in a hoarse voice. 'Would to God we were!'

'Well,' I went on ruthlessly, 'and why do I find you masquerading here as wife of my best friend? Surely you were not so confiding as to believe that you, of all women, could remain long undiscovered?'

'Not if you were in the vicinity,' she replied in a tone of hatred, her teeth set hard, her eyes flashing an angry fire.

'No, no,' I laughed. 'To struggle against the inevitable is useless. You were ill-advised to marry Gordon Clunes. It is not often that you make such a grave error as this; but it is a step you cannot retrace. That you married him with some set purpose is quite apparent. I won't ask you what it is, because I know you well enough to be aware that I should never obtain the truth from your lips. But,' I added in a stern, meaning tone, 'if you suppose that I will allow my friend to be longer imposed upon by a woman so unscrupulous and worthless, then you are mistaken.'

'You dare!' she cried, rising quickly to her feet, pale with alarm. 'You—you intend to expose me?'

'Do you recollect your words on the last occasion we met?' I asked, also rising and regarding her fixedly. She was, I knew, a woman who would hesitate at nothing in order to gain her ends.

'I forget nothing,' she answered in a low, harsh tone.

'Neither do I,' I replied. 'Once you played me false.'

'Ah, no, Philip!' she cried, her manner in an instant changing from defiance to penitence. 'I tell you that was not my fault. You have misjudged me.'

'But you have nevertheless inveigled Gordon into marriage,' I said bitterly. 'And I am his friend.'

She paused, her eyes fixed for a moment on the burning logs. I saw that she held me in fear.

'But I am his wife,' she said.

'Exactly. And for that very reason I intend to tell him the truth.'

'You dare not,' she said, her face white and resolute. 'Listen; if you utter one word to him

I will explain all that I know. You are fully aware of what I mean.'

I smiled. It was just as I had expected. From her manner I had divined her secret intention to expose me; but victory generally is with him who strikes the first blow, and I saw that she was now in deadly fear of me.

'And if you spoke who would believe you?' I said in order to taunt her, for by doing so I thought I might perhaps gather something further of her plans.

'Once you measured your strength with mine, and proved victor,' she said in a voice of intense hatred. 'My life was wrecked because of you. I staked high and lost—ignominiously. You were too clever, and outwitted me. I shall take care to repay the debt.'

'After Gordon has cast you from his house,' I said, preserving a perfect calm.

'If you dare to tell him, the result will be fatal to your own interests—to all your prospects. You go now to Brussels. Good! Forewarned is forearmed.'

'If your husband overhears this interesting conversation he'll no doubt be edified,' I said.

'He cannot overhear,' she answered in a strained voice. Then she added quickly, 'Do you imagine that I fear any statement that you may care to make about me? You have no evidence.'

'Except one little piece, which is, I think you'll admit, quite sufficient.'

'And what is that, pray?' she inquired, with indignation.

'Something which you have apparently forgotten,' I answered: 'your photograph taken when you left your enforced confinement in that place where they didn't trouble to air the beds, and where the drawing-room was not exactly in Early English style.'

My words held her dumb. She stood before me open-mouthed, her countenance blanched to the lips.

Suddenly her hands clenched, her cold blue eyes darted at me a look of evil, a murderous glance that I had only once seen before, and, uttering an imprecation, she cried, with a strained hollow laugh:

'Then tell him! tell him! But recollect that if you do I will make a statement to the press which will considerably alter the political situation in Europe. You have to choose between silence and exposure.'

And without further word she swept past me out of the room.

I laughed to myself, for this scene had been enacted exactly as I had intended it should be, and I saw by her manner that my threat to expose her had sealed her lips. She had become Gordon's wife for some mysterious purpose or other, and it was evident that she did not mean to relinquish her position. This fact gave me confidence, for I saw that as long as she remained with him she dare utter no word of the past.

I remained there alone for a few minutes; then, hearing no sound, I opened the door and crossed the hall to the dining-room in search of Gordon. The room was, however, empty; therefore, recollecting that the door at the end of that room led to my friend's cosy little study where we had smoked when I had first visited him, I walked across and opened it.

On the couch on the opposite side of the writing-table Gordon was lying, and on seeing him I cried:

'Wake up, old chap! Not too seedy to see me, are you?'

His face was turned to the wall, and he was apparently sleeping soundly. For a moment I hesitated whether I should rouse him; but suddenly the paleness of his neck against the cushion of dark-red velvet struck me as peculiar, and I bent over and looked into his face. His eyes—those merry laughing eyes I knew so well—were wide open. I touched his cheek with my fingertips. It was pale, waxen, and as cold as ice. In an instant the ghastly truth flashed upon me, and involuntarily I uttered a cry of horror and dismay. Gordon Clunes, the husband of this scheming, evil woman who held my secret, was dead.

## REMINISCENCES OF GLADSTONE.

By WILLIAM SIDEBOTHAM.



THE first volume of Mr Morley's *Life of Gladstone* is expected to be published shortly; and the circumstance recalls the fact that when Mr Morley was in a less exalted position than that which he now occupies, he himself contributed to a magazine what he called a survey of the position Lord Macaulay held in the world of letters, in order that it might be on record just before the appearance of Sir George Trevelyan's book on the life of Macaulay.

A similar survey preceding the official life of Mr Gladstone ought to be of considerable interest, were it not for the fact that the fires of political controversy still blaze, and the recollections of many a fierce battle are still fresh in public memory. But how often have biographers and politicians regretted the absence of anecdotes and personal traits in regard to the great Pitt, whose career and commanding position bore some resemblance to that of Mr Gladstone! And it is remarkable how rapidly personal reminiscences of the latter statesman are fading away, for the generation which knew him most intimately and had the best opportunities of observing his life and actions in the heyday of his power is rapidly disappearing. Of all the men in the House of Commons who were colleagues of his in the Cabinet barely twenty years ago, Sir William Harcourt alone remains.

There is perhaps no man of whom so many anecdotes can be related by those who have had exceptional opportunities of personal observation; and although some of those who were privileged to know him in later years have readily 'rushed into print' with all that their memory could recall, Mr Gladstone's actions and sayings were so essentially of an anecdotal character that, in the absence of any one with the instincts of a born Boswell, every year diminishes the chance of those personal traits being saved from oblivion.

Three men in the later part of the nineteenth century had the remarkable power of attracting large audiences by their *ardentia verba*; and each of them possessed in an extraordinary degree the gift of personal anecdote. The first was Dr Guthrie; the next was Charles Haddon Spurgeon; and last, but not least, was Mr Gladstone. Mr Gladstone seldom delivered an important speech in which he did not tell some circumstance connected with his own life, and which if related of any other man would have been regarded as an interesting anecdote; but most of those narrations are now entombed in his speeches, and as the generation that heard them has forgotten them, they will probably remain thus hidden away. Any one wishing to produce an anecdotal biography of the great statesman could do so by undertaking the task—which would be no light one—of reading through the whole of his speeches. In these circumstances it may be worth while to place on record a few facts and traits observed by one who, as a silent observer, had exceptional opportunities of making notes during the last years—some of them the most eventful—of Mr Gladstone's life in the House of Commons.

One of the reasons that made Mr Gladstone's life so full of anecdote, and enabled him at any time to recall an incident to adorn the argument he was putting before his audience, was the great length and varied experience of his career. I once heard him state that he was present as a youth in the old House of Commons in the year 1831, and that he then witnessed the carrying of the first Reform Bill, introduced by Lord John Russell, by a majority of one; and it is a remarkable circumstance that on the occasion of the debate on the last Reform Bill, carried through the House of Commons in 1884, an incident was recalled in reference to Mr Gladstone's first speech in Parliament in 1833 which amused the great statesman, and which, I believe, was not reported in any newspaper at the time. The incident was told by Sir Eardley Wilmot just before the dinner-hour, when

the attendance was small, and the debate was flagging into what has been called 'the lapping waters of Opposition oratory.' Mr Gladstone was reclining on the Treasury bench listening to the speeches, and Sir Eardley, then an old gray-headed man, got up on the Opposition side and denounced the bill as violating every principle of constitutional law. In order to somewhat alleviate the unstinted character of his condemnation he said, speaking quietly across the floor of the House, that it might interest the Prime-Minister to know that he (Sir Eardley) was present in the Strangers' Gallery on the night when Mr Gladstone delivered his maiden speech. He had been brought there to hear the debate (which was on the slave-trade in the West Indies) by a relative of his who was then a member of Parliament—Colonel Wilmot. Among the speakers was a young man whose name was then practically unknown, either to the members or to the general public. Later in the evening Colonel Wilmot proceeded to the Strangers' Gallery, and, addressing his young relative, observed, 'Did you hear the speech delivered by that young man?' pointing him out. 'His name is Gladstone; and, whether you live to see it or not, his ability is so remarkable that he will some day be Prime-Minister of England.' Mr Gladstone listened to the narrative with a beaming countenance; and when Sir Eardley had finished the story the Premier, who had during its recital raised himself to hear it more distinctly, again resumed his reclining position on the Treasury bench. The account of Mr Disraeli's first speech in the House of Commons has long been a matter of notoriety, but this incident in connection with Mr Gladstone's maiden effort, though not less remarkable, is not known to the public.

Mr Gladstone was often accused by his opponents of a love of applause; but from long observation I can state that he was singularly *insouciant* to anything in the nature of a compliment, although his courtesy, which was universally admitted, always led him to acknowledge any flattering observations made about him. During his long career, despite the fact that some of his political actions at times caused great animosity, he was the recipient of panegyrics from all quarters of the House of Commons; but, with one exception, I do not remember to have seen or heard of his being much affected by these encomiums. The compliment to which I refer—a compliment which was about the last that might be expected to evoke any involuntary appreciation—was given in 1881, when the Irish Question was before Parliament for practically the whole of the session. Some remarks had been made to the effect that the representatives of Ireland, unlike those of England and Scotland, had rarely asked for money from the British Government for purely Irish purposes. A prominent Irish

member, who was sitting behind Mr Gladstone, and whose utterances always commanded the special attention of the Premier, rose and contravened the statement, declaring that he himself had often formed one of a deputation at the Treasury with the object of trying to get money for Irish purposes; but, he added, the experience he had gained was this—that he never met any man who could say 'No' with a better grace than Mr Gladstone. This observation evidently came upon the Prime-Minister as a surprise, for he burst into a laugh; but in order to hide it he first bit his lip and then put his hand over his face. The compliment, though rather an oblique one, was appreciated by Mr Gladstone; and it seemed as if he felt conscious that the speaker had 'reckoned him up' at his real value in that respect.

Talking about the year 1881 recalls to mind an incident which much impressed me at the time. I happened to be chatting one evening with 'an old parliamentary hand,' who had been in the House of Commons during the premierships of Sir R. Peel, Lord John Russell, and Lord Palmerston, and who had also heard most of the great debaters of the present century. He admitted that in oratorical versatility Mr Gladstone had no equal; but, looking at the Prime-Minister as he lay apparently asleep on the Treasury bench, he remarked that Mr Gladstone's countenance resembled that of an old woman. I replied that at certain times he had that appearance, but pointed out that his features more than those of any of the great men I had known were the most changeable. I reminded my friend of the statement which Coleridge had made in his *Table Talk* in regard to one of the most profound thinkers, as well as one of the greatest men of letters, he had known. Coleridge said, '—'s face is almost the only exception I know to the observation that something feminine—not *effeminate*, mind—is discoverable in the countenance of all men of genius. Look at the face of Dampier, a rough sailor, but a man of exquisite mind. How soft is the air of his countenance; how delicate is the shape of his temples!' This conversation recalls the description given by Lord Cockburn in *Memorials of his Time* of the man who in intellectual characteristics perhaps came nearest to Mr Gladstone of any that this century has produced—namely, Dr Chalmers. Lord Cockburn says of him: 'He is awkward, and has a low, rough, husky voice, a guttural articulation, a whitish eye, and a large dingy countenance. In point of mere feature, it would not be difficult to think him ugly. . . . But in spite of the external disadvantages of a bad figure, voice, gesture, and look, and an unusual plainness of Scotch accent, he is a great orator; for *effect*, indeed, at the moment of speaking, unapproached in our day. Yet he seldom utters an extemporaneous word. His habit is to have everything written, to the very letter.'

The last two sentences emphasise the very notable difference there was in what may be termed the speaking habits of the two men. One of the things that often amused and interested me was to observe Mr Gladstone during the period of cogitation, which was the germ-time of some of his greatest speeches. The following was the method he almost invariably adopted: When an important debate was drawing to a close, he listened attentively to the arguments of the various speakers, and at intervals jotted down a number of 'heads' on slips of paper; and when the leader of the Opposition rose to address the House, Mr Gladstone generally rewrote the chief items on a single sheet. While his distinguished opponent was delivering his speech—which was always expected to be the most powerful—the Premier was busy arranging his reply. He would write down several phrases which he evidently intended to be the cardinal points, and would frequently place a figure in front of each line to notify the order in which he thought his argument could best be developed when he spoke. If in the course of his revision something occurred to him which could be worked into these 'heads,' he wrote a few words at the bottom of the slip of paper, and then drew lines diagrammatically from the headings to the words he had just written. I have sometimes seen his sheet of notes so interwoven with these lines that they almost resembled a map. While doing this he heard the whole of his opponent's speech. To him the feat of writing, revising, and listening at the same time seemed to give little trouble, and it was done with perfect *sang froid* at a time when, owing to the cheering of the Opposition, the House was frequently in a fever of excitement. Members, especially the new-comers, were often as much interested in watching Mr Gladstone indulging in what seemed to be a sort of schoolboy exercise as in listening to the philippic to which he was about to reply. When Mr Gladstone came to the House to take part in a prearranged debate or to expound an important bill he brought copious notes, but it was often observed that frequently he made little use of them.

Two characteristics of the late statesman seemed to distinguish him pre-eminently in the House of Commons—his eloquence and his courtesy. The former has often been described, for combined with a mellifluous voice, which for power and pathos was unique, he also possessed dramatic abilities equal to those of David Garrick, causing him to be probably the greatest rhetorician since the days of Pitt. The other feature, which was not less conspicuous, was his unflinching courtesy. Often as he walked up the floor of the House his tall figure and dignified presence suggested the words of Tennyson about bearing without abuse the grand old name of gentleman. Some of the courtesies of parliamentary life may almost be said to have died with him. In the pre-Reform

days it was the custom of all the members on walking up the floor of the House to bow to the Speaker in the chair; but the practice is now only observed, except in a very few cases, by new members on taking the oath. Mr Gladstone, however, maintained the habit up to the last. Very rarely was he seen to be 'nettled,' especially during the later years of his parliamentary life; but now and then a trivial incident which seemed to impute discourtesy to him appeared to be keenly felt.

On one occasion an obscure member who had put a question on foreign affairs to the right honourable gentleman, and had received an adequate reply, continued day after day to repeat the question in a different form, until Mr Gladstone evidently came to the conclusion that his interrogator was unworthy of further consideration, and he answered him rather brusquely. The member retorted by asking in a somewhat upbraiding tone whether the Prime-Minister would reply to the question if it were put by the leader of the Opposition. Mr Gladstone immediately jumped up as if stung by the taunt of discourtesy, and assured the member that there was no ground for the insinuation; but instantly recovering his sense of dignity, as if he had suddenly remembered that the imputation had not come from a foeman worthy of his steel, he again quietly answered the question. On another occasion he did not conceal his mortification when an Irish member who had not succeeded in 'drawing him' referred to Mr Gladstone's son (who had just been elected to a seat in the House) as a young man who might some day get the reversion of the public hangman's job. The Premier characterised this remark as brutal, and declared that probably the only distinction of the person who had made it was that he was the first man he had known in Parliament who had broken the traditional courtesy of according a polite reception to a new member.

Another remarkable feature of the deceased statesman, which even the public who only read his speeches must have noticed, was the magnanimous way in which he complimented political opponents on their speeches, and superficial readers sometimes thought that this was a sort of political makeweight previous to a vigorous onslaught; but those who were in the House and saw the courtesy which he invariably extended to his adversaries generally regarded it as the outcome of his large-mindedness.

I remember one evening a debate took place upon the granting of pensions. It was raised by a Conservative member who had written a book reviewing Mr Gladstone's parliamentary career, with the object of showing his previous political inconsistency. The book attracted considerable attention at the time, and even Mr Gladstone was the recipient of a large number of letters regarding it. There was a great deal of curiosity

evinced as to how he would deal with his opponent's condemnation; and when the aged statesman rose to address the House, he prefaced his remarks by paying a tribute to the honourable member, characterising his speech as a model of moderation, careful investigation, and judicious treatment of the subject. The member in question, who had evidently expected to be violently attacked, seemed to be nonplussed, and blushed visibly at the unlooked-for praise, and this was superseded by a smile as Mr Gladstone quietly went on to state that the subject was a proper one to bring before the House, and that he had had great responsibility resting upon him in regard to the granting of pensions, but that he would be prepared at any time to go before a committee of investigation to answer for any pension he had proposed.

The 'Great Commoner' towards the end of his parliamentary career paid special attention to the speeches of certain members. The late Mr Charles Bradlaugh—incredible as it may seem—exercised a strange fascination over Mr Gladstone for which no satisfactory explanation has hitherto been given. When the honourable member rose to address the House the aged statesman would leave his seat in order to get nearer to the speaker; and if Mr Bradlaugh unexpectedly took part in a debate during the temporary absence of Mr Gladstone, the latter would almost invariably enter the House a few minutes later, as if he had come specially from his private room to hear the speech; and it seemed as if he had made arrangements to be informed immediately Mr Bradlaugh 'caught the Speaker's eye.' Some time after the death of Mr Bradlaugh there was a debate in the House of Commons as to the advisableness of allowing a Roman Catholic to become Lord Chancellor. Mr Gladstone delivered a most eloquent speech in favour of the proposal, and in the course of his remarks he incidentally paid a tribute to 'that distinguished man,' Mr Bradlaugh.

In the zenith of his parliamentary career Mr Gladstone's Budget speeches were popularly regarded as his *chef-d'œuvre*. He had the unique distinction of introducing about a dozen Budgets; and although he spoke at much greater length than his successors, his masterly exposition, his wonderful grasp of details, and his unrivalled knowledge of finance always commanded a crowded House, which listened with riveted attention to the sometimes novel but always ingenious and interesting proposals. Some of his later financial statements as compared with the earlier ones appeared somewhat commonplace; but this was probably because there was nothing startling to enunciate, and having forged his way to the very front rank as an orator, and there being no special need to display his brilliancy, he adopted a quiet, business-like tone in introducing them.

It is worthy of note that the 'Grand Old Man' was the only statesman in the history of England

who was four times Prime-Minister; and his knowledge of every department of government was unique. He had made a special study of the intricacies of parliamentary procedure, and was recognised as the greatest authority on the subject. It is believed he was instrumental in passing more measures than any other statesman. To enable him to do this necessitated an immense amount of reading, so that he could get sufficient data to successfully meet the arguments of his opponents; and having a most tenacious memory, he was always perfectly *au fait* with any subject that might be brought forward. In this connection an amusing incident may be mentioned which occurred when he was last in office. One evening while the Budget resolutions were under discussion, the question arose as to the way the income-tax was levied in Ireland. Mr Arthur Balfour, who was at the time leader of the Opposition, rose and explained that the income-tax in Ireland was assessed in a different way from that in England, giving details of the two methods. This was done in a most courteous manner, and he evidently thought that the great parliamentarian would be pleased to have the information. When Mr Balfour—who while in the position of Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant had become familiar with Irish finance—had resumed his seat Mr Gladstone at once got up, and graciously thanked the leader of the Opposition for his kindness in explaining the peculiarities of the Irish income-tax, observing that no doubt the right hon. gentleman had had later opportunities of mastering the subject than he could lay claim to. 'But it so happens,' he added, 'that it was I who introduced that method of levying the income-tax in Ireland over forty years ago.' Mr Balfour, who was then only forty-five years of age, looked quite crestfallen; while Sir William Harcourt, Mr Morley, Mr Asquith, and the other occupants of the Treasury bench were unable to conceal their elation.

Despite the great amount of work which the duties of his office entailed upon him, Mr Gladstone gave his attention to the most trivial details, which many people would regard as incompatible with his great mental powers. One incident in particular recurs to my mind in this regard. Some years ago Mr Gladstone had written two letters and addressed the envelopes. One of them required two stamps, but by mistake he had put them on the wrong envelope. Instead of getting another stamp he set himself the task of rescuing the superfluous one. He wet his finger several times and applied it to the stamp, and after a great deal of trouble he managed to pull it off the envelope, and, placing it on the right one with an air of triumph as if he had won a battle, he left the House evidently with the object of posting the letters.

It is not generally known that in early life Mr Gladstone, owing, I believe, to an accident

while out shooting, lost the forefinger of his left hand, and consequently he always wore a piece of black silk (which was kept in position by two pieces of narrow tape of the same colour fastened round his wrist) over the stump. No matter how carefully the piece of silk had been fixed, it had, in consequence of its awkward position, to be repeatedly adjusted; and often, when in the midst of his greatest flights of oratory, and when the House was electrified by his brilliant periods, Mr Gladstone could be seen carefully readjusting the piece of silk, showing that even at the most exciting times he was always self-possessed, and that his great intellect enabled him to think of several subjects at the same time. This faculty was also strikingly manifested when, in the position of leader of the House, he had to write frequent letters to the Queen giving his impressions as to public business. These letters he often wrote while sitting on the Treasury bench after the dinner-hour, and they sometimes appeared to tax even his mental resources. He wrote them in a small and not very legible hand, and their composition occupied a considerable time. Sometimes he would pause for a few minutes before finishing a half-written letter, and would occasionally delete a word or two after reading what he had already written. In no duty did he seem to take such care, and keen observers often remarked that he could more easily deliver a long speech than write a letter to Her Majesty. While his mind was apparently absorbed in this work he was at the same time listening to the speeches which were being delivered, as was evidenced by the fact that he often jumped up to correct an oral statement or to explain some point in regard to the subject under discussion.

Since Mr Gladstone's death Mr Lecky has re-issued his book on *Democracy and Liberty*, to which he has added a new introduction, in which he devotes a considerable space to an estimate of the character and work of the late statesman. He there gives a brilliant picture of Mr Gladstone's countenance, and especially of his 'eye like Mars, to threaten and command.' In the course of his remarks Mr Lecky says: 'No one could stand before a good portrait of Gladstone without feeling that he was in the presence of an extraordinary man. Yet the greatest painter could only represent one of the many moods of that ever-changing and most expressive countenance. Few men have had so many faces, and the wonderful play of his features contributed very largely to the effectiveness of his speaking. It was a countenance eminently fitted to express enthusiasm, pathos, profound melancholy, commanding power, and lofty disdain. . . . He had a wonderful eye—a bird-of-prey eye—fierce, luminous, and restless. . . . Its piercing glance added greatly to his eloquence, and was, no doubt, one of the chief elements of that strong personal magnetism which he undoubtedly possessed.' In this connection I

may mention that one of the attendants at the House of Commons once told me an incident which gives additional testimony to the marvellous expressiveness of Mr Gladstone's eye. This attendant at one time occupied a position which brought him for some years under the direct notice of Mr Gladstone; but owing to some change being made, he was for a considerable time placed in a part of the House which the aged statesman never visited. The attendant was at length stationed outside one of the doors leading to the House, and on Mr Gladstone noticing him he cordially shook hands with the attendant, and expressed pleasure at seeing him. The man, in telling me of the incident, said that what impressed him more than anything else was the wonderful fascination and expressiveness of Mr Gladstone's eyes, which beamed with pleasure as he was speaking. Many instances are on record showing that at times when his political adversaries had interjected some angry remarks while he was addressing the House, Mr Gladstone by a look seemed almost to paralyse them. Boehm, the eminent sculptor, was once present when an altercation took place between the late statesman and a Scotch professor, and he has related that when the professor was about to make a violent attack on Mr Gladstone he suddenly stopped as if fascinated by the glance which was given him.

So much has been written in praise of his eloquence that I have purposely avoided giving instances of its marvellous power and effect; but in all the accounts which have appeared I have never seen stated what, to my mind, was the most remarkable feature in his character as a statesman—namely, the striking resemblance he bore to his greatest political predecessor, William Pitt. Pitt may be described as the parliamentary Achilles at the close of the last century, and Mr Gladstone occupied a similar position at the end of the present century. Very few anecdotes and personal reminiscences of Pitt have been made public, and no distinguished speaker of his day seems more to have suffered from the inaccuracy of reporters. Gifford, in his *Life of this great statesman*, published in 1814, speaks of his style and power as an orator; while in a masterly article the *Quarterly Review* shortly afterwards dealt with the eloquence of Pitt, stating that it owed 'its penetrating quality to its being impalpable,' and that there was always a sensation that 'something, however undefinable, was left untold.' In the case of Mr Gladstone the reports of his speeches which have appeared in the public press would fill many volumes; but the same observation that was made about Pitt in regard to the impalpability of his speeches applies with equal force to Gladstone; for, no matter how long he spoke or how convincing his arguments appeared to be, he always seemed to have something in reserve. He possessed astonishing firmness, with an intellectual grasp and a remarkably

seductive power of statement, and these qualities (combined with an unusual intensity of conviction on the ethical aspect of the question which he was advocating) raised him to the pinnacle of success during his lifetime; and it may safely

be predicted that future generations, no matter what their opinions may be in reference to the political views he held, will regard him as one of the greatest statesmen that this country has produced.

## YOU SING.

IN FOUR CHAPTERS.—CHAPTER IV.

**H**AVING no means of knowing the time—for the clock had never been wound, owing to my not being able to find the key—I cannot tell when the change came; but I think it must have been about eight next morning. The vessel suddenly righted, and then began to tumble about in so outrageous a fashion that I thought she must go all to pieces. Elsie awoke screaming with fright; and with all You Sing's cat-like capacity for holding on, it was some minutes before he could get to her to comfort her. He had not left my side more than ten minutes, when, with a tremendous lurch, the vessel was hurled over to starboard, and I knew that my greatest fear was realised—she had been caught aback! Over, over she went until it was almost possible to stand upright upon the lee bulk-heads of the cabin. In sea-phrases, she was on her beam-ends.

I now gave all up for lost, and waited, hardly breathing, for the crash of the end. The water on deck burst in through every crevice and rose upon the lee-side until I was obliged to climb up to the fast-clamped settees to windward to avoid being drowned. The uproar on deck was louder than ever, and I fancied that I could hear every now and then through the tumult the rending and crashing of spars, and feel the shattering blow of their great masses against the hull alongside. But still the vessel appeared staunch, although every inch of her framework visible in the cabin was all awork.

After what seemed like a whole day, but could only have been two or three hours, she began to right herself, and the din outside grew less deafening. Rapidly the howl of the wind moderated, although the vessel still tossed and tumbled about in frantic fashion, until my anxiety to see daylight again got the better of my fears, and I painfully made my way up the companion, opened it, and stepped on to the poop. The sight I beheld took away my breath. The *Blitzen* was a complete wreck. Not a stick was standing except the three jagged stumps of the lower masts; the bulwarks were stripped from her sides for their entire length, the house on deck had clean disappeared, and everything that could be torn from its fastenings about the decks had gone also. It was a clean sweep. A cold shiver went through

me, such as one might feel upon awakening to find his house roofless and all his household gods exposed to the glare of day. But the sky was clear, the sea was going down, and we were still afloat. A great wave of thankfulness came over me, suddenly checked by the paralysing thought that perhaps we had sprung a leak. I stood still for a moment while this latest fear soaked in; then, bracing myself up to learn the worst, I hurried forward to try and find the rod to sound the well. But it had gone, among the rest of the carpenter's gear, with the deck-house, and I was obliged to give up the idea. Returning aft, I uncovered the cabin skylight and went below, finding You Sing busy preparing some food. Then I suddenly remembered that I was ravenously hungry, and we all three sat down and ate our fill cheerfully and gladly. But while we were swallowing the last morsels of our meal, You Sing gravely lifted his hand and sat listening intently. There was a strange sound on deck, and it made me almost helpless with fear. For it sounded like the singing chatter of Chinese. We sat for a few moments as if suddenly frozen, listening with every faculty, and hardly breathing. Then, ghost-like, You Sing rose, and taking the two of us by the arms, gently persuaded us into one of the state-rooms at hand and signed to us to keep close while he went to investigate. Noiselessly he glided away from us and was gone, leaving us a prey to the most harrowing sensations in the belief that all our cruel forebodings were about to be proved true. For some time not a sound could be heard in our hiding-place except the soothing creak of the timbers or the wash of the caressing waves outside the hull. Yet I remember curiously how even in that agony of suspense I noticed that the motion of the ship was changed. She no longer seemed to swing buoyantly from wave to wave, but solemnly, stolidly, she rolled as if the sea had taken possession of her, and bereft her of her own grace of mastery.

A confused thudding sound reached us from above as if caused by the pattering of bare feet on deck; but there were no voices, nor, indeed, any other noises to give us a clue as to what was going on. Very soon even that slight sound ceased, and we were left again to the dumbness of our surroundings. The child went to sleep;

and I, after perhaps half-an-hour of strained listening, felt that I could bear this condition of things no longer, for it had seemed like a whole day to my excited imaginings. So, as silently as had You Sing long ago, I stole from the little state-room and across the saloon. With all my terrors weighing me down, I crawled worm-like up the companion-ladder and wriggled on to the deck on all-fours. The sea, and the sky, and the barren deck all lay in perfect silence, which pressed upon me like one of those nightmares in which you feel that unless you can scream you must die. After two or three attempts I moistened my parched mouth and called 'You Sing!' There was no voice or any one that answered. But that I think the limit of my capacity for being terrified had been reached some time before, I believe this irresponsiveness, with its accompanying sensation of being utterly alone, would have made me an idiot. As it was, I only felt numbed and tired. Slowly I stood up upon my feet, and went forrard to the break of the poop, learning at once the reason of You Sing's silence. For by the side of the after-hatch lay three Chinese, naked and dead, bearing on their bodies the grim evidences of the method of their ending. Close to the cabin door, as if he had dragged himself away from his late antagonists in the vain hope of reaching his friends again, lay You Sing. As I looked down upon him he moved slightly. In a moment, forgetting everything else, I was by his side and had lifted his head upon my knee. He opened his glazing eyes and looked up into my face with his old sweet smile, now with something of highest satisfaction in it. His dry lips opened and he murmured, 'Ulo, Tommy; all li-tee.' Then the intelligence faded out of his eyes, and he left me.

It must have been hours afterwards when I again realised my surroundings. Elsie was sitting by the piece of yellow clay that had been You Sing, perfectly still, but with an occasional tearing sob. She must have been crying for a long time. Gradually the whole of the past came back to me, and I saw how our dead friend had indeed paid in full what he considered to be his debt to us; although how that mild and gentle creature, in whom I never saw even so much as a shade of vexation, much less anger, could have risen to such a height of fighting valour as to slay three men in our defence was utterly beyond my powers of comprehension. For, without attempting any eloquence of panegyric, that was precisely what he had done, and with his opponents' own weapons, too. To say that I had not really felt lonely and helpless until now only faintly conveys the appalling sense of loss that had come upon me. As for the poor child, she crouched by the side of the corpse, scarcely more alive than it was, manifesting no fear or repugnance at the presence of death; indeed, she appeared unable to realise the great fact in its full terror.

How long we both sat in this dazed condition it is impossible to say with any definiteness. No doubt it was for several hours, for we both seemed only partially alive; and, for my part, the only impression left was that all besides ourselves were dead. That feeling carried with it a dim anticipation that we too might expect to find our turn to depart confronting us at any moment; but in this thought there was no fear, rather relief.

How often, I wonder, has it been noted that in times of deep mental distress, when the mind appears to have had a mortal blow, and all those higher faculties which are our peculiar possession are so numbed that they give no definite assistance to the organism, the animal needs of the body have instinctively asserted themselves, and thus saved the entire man or woman from madness or death? It must surely be one of the commonest of experiences, although seldom formulated in so many words. At any rate, this was now the case with me. Gradually the fact that I was parched with thirst became the one conscious thing; and, without thinking about it, without any definite idea even, I found myself on my feet, swaying and staggering as I crossed the bare deck to where the scuttle-butt used to be lashed. Finding it gone, I stood helplessly staring at the ends of the lashings that had secured it, with a dull, stupid anger of disappointment. Then I began to think; I had to, for my need was imperative. I remembered that You Sing had brought into the cabin before the typhoon a store of water sufficient for days. This mental effort was bracing, doing much to restore me again to some show of usefulness. I soon found the water, and hurried on deck once more, for the cabin was no place to stay in now. It was tenanted by shapes of dread, full of inaudible signs of woe; and right glad was I to regain the side of the little girl for living companionship. I offered her some water. She looked at it dully, as if unable to attach any idea to it; and it was only by repeatedly rousing her that I managed to awaken any reason in her injured mind at all. In the absence of any such compulsion I think she would have just sat still and ceased to live, painlessly and unconsciously.

Now that the needs of another were laid upon me, I began to move about a little more briskly and to notice our condition with returning interest. For some time the strange steadiness of the ship had puzzled me without arousing any definite inquiry in my mind as to the cause of it. But in crossing the deck to re-enter the cabin the true significance of that want of motion suddenly burst upon me, for I saw the calm face of the water only a few inches from the deck-line. The *Blitzen* was sinking. During the typhoon she must have received tremendous injuries from the wreckage of her top-hamper,

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that, floating alongside entangled in the web of its rigging, was as dangerous as so many rocks would have been. There was urgent need now for thought and action also. For there was nothing of any kind on deck floatable. Boats, spars, hen-coops, all had gone. A thousand futile thoughts chased one another through my throbbing brain, but they ran in circles that led nowhere. There seemed to be no possible means of escape. Yet somehow I was not hopeless. I felt a curious reliance upon the fact that we two small people had come through so much unhurt in any way, and this baseless unreasoning faith in our good (?) fortune forbade me to despair. So that I cannot say I felt greatly surprised when I presently saw on the starboard side forrard a small *sampan* floating placidly, its grass painter made fast to the fore-chains. There was no mystery about its appearance. It had brought those awful visitors whose defeat caused You Sing his life, and was probably the only surviving relic of some junk that had foundered in the storm. The sight of it did me a world of good. Rushing to Elsie, I pointed out the fact of our immediate danger, and of the hope left us, and after some little difficulty succeeded in getting her into the *sampan*. The *Blitzen* was now so low in the water that my remaining time was countable by seconds. I flew into the cabin, snatched up a few biscuits and the large can of water that stood in the bathroom, and rushed for the boat. As I scrambled into her with my burden I noticed shudderingly that the ship was beginning to move, but with such a motion! It was like the death-throe of a man—a physical fact with which of late I had been well acquainted. Every plank of her groaned as if in agony; she gave a quivering sideway stagger. My fingers trembled so that I could hardly cast adrift the painter, which I was compelled to do, having no knife. I got the clumsy hitches adrift at last, and with one of the rough oars gave our frail craft a vigorous shove off, Elsie staring all the while at the

huge hull with dilating eyes and drawn white face. Presently the *Blitzen* seemed to stumble; a wave upreared itself out of the smooth brightness of the placid sea and embraced her bows, drawing them gently down. So gently, like a tired woman sinking to rest, did the *Blitzen* leave the light, and only a few foam-flecked whorls and spirals on the surface marked for a minute or two the spot where she had been.

Happily for us who were left, our troubles were nearly at an end. One calm night of restless dozing under the warm sky, trying not to think of what a tiny bubble we made on the wide sea, we passed not uncomfortably. Just before dawn I felt rather than heard a throbbing, its regular pulsations beating steadily as if inside my head. But they had not lasted one minute before I knew them for the propeller-beat of a steamer, and strained my eyes around through the departing darkness for a sight of her. Straight for us she came, the watchful officer on the bridge having seen us more than a mile off. In the most matter-of-fact way we were taken on board, and Elsie was soon mothered by the skipper's wife, while I was being made much of by the men. And that was all. Of all that mass of treasure that had caused the sacrifice of so many lives not one atom remained where it could ever again raise the demon of murder in human breasts. And although I could not realise all this, I really did not feel sorry that I had not succeeded in saving the slightest portion of it, my thankfulness at being spared alive being so great.

There were no passengers on board to make a fuss, so none was made. Three days afterwards we were at Hong-kong, and Elsie was handed over to the German Consul, who gravely took down my story, but I could see did not believe half of it. I bade good-bye to Elsie, having elected to remain by the steamer, where I was being well treated, and in due time reached England again, a step nearer to becoming a full-fledged seaman.

### SOME REMARKABLE SWORDS.



WE noticed with regret that the descriptions of the sword of honour recently presented to the Sirdar, though they show that the weapon is in every way perfect and splendid value for the hundred guineas given for it, contain no mention of any motto or inscription having been engraved thereon, as was the custom of old. It will be recalled that each of the three swords presented by the Kaiser to his three eldest sons last year bore an inscription, such as 'Thy strength belongs to the Fatherland. To my dear son Wilhelm,

Christmas 1897.—WILHELMUS.' Whilst the other side bore the following admonition: 'Trust in God and bear thyself bravely that thy fair name and honour may be maintained; for he who trusts to God from the bottom of his heart will never be defeated on the field of battle.' 'Fearless and true' was inscribed on another weapon, and on a third, 'Never draw this sword without a reason, and never return it into its sheath until honour is satisfied'—which was the Kaiser's rendering of a motto, very popular once upon a time on Toledo blades, which ran, 'Do not draw me without reason; do not sheathe me

without honour.' For a weapon presented by a man of peace to a soldier the legend once engraved on a Ferrara blade, 'My value varies with the hand that holds me,' would be rather appropriate; but another inscription, 'When this viper stings there is no cure in any doctors' shops,' would be hardly suitable for one who values his own prowess at so modest a figure as the Sirdar.

Some little time ago it was announced in a contemporary that the 'sword of ceremony,' made by Professor Herkomer, which is to be used at Welsh Eisteddfods of the future, was 'the largest sword on record;' and, doubtless, if placed in the hands of a modern Godfrey de Bouillon—who, it will be recalled, with a two-handed sword cleaved a Turk into halves from the shoulder to the hips—its six feet two inches of length would be quite long enough for any one who had a business engagement with it. But although it exceeds by two inches the thirty-pound (avoirdupois) weapon used by Henry the Pious, Duke of Silesia, and is probably more lengthy than the famous two-handed sword of Archibald Bell-the-Cat or Exeter's sword of state, it is still ten inches shorter than the seven-foot ceremonial sword, weighing eighteen pounds, that was made for Edward III., and is now preserved in Westminster Abbey.

On the occasion of George III.'s coronation the sword of state, says Horace Walpole, was forgotten—they do these things better nowadays—and the Lord Mayor's was borrowed for the occasion. Although nothing is said concerning its identity, undoubtedly it would be the celebrated pearl sword that was utilised. 'There are four swords,' said a writer at the beginning of the century, apropos of the Lord Mayor—'the black, used on Good Friday, 30th of January, Fire of London, and all fast-days, when his Lordship ought to go to St Paul's; the common sword, to go to sessions, courts of aldermen; . . . the Sunday sword; and the pearl sword, which used to be carried on very rare occasions only, but is now exhibited at any time.' The office of sword-bearer at that time was a valuable one, the last holder of the post purchasing it, giving £7000 for the office, which he could have sold for £9000, 'but was prevented by the corporation,' who made it a gift place. Besides apartments in the Old Bailey and other privileges, the sword-bearer derived emolument from granting admission to two galleries during the sessions.

Apropos of the sword of state, we learn elsewhere, with regard to the coronation of Her Majesty, that 'the Queen, riding up and going to the altar, offers the sword there in the scabbard, delivering it to the Archbishop, who places it on the altar; the Queen then returns and sits down in King Edward's chair; and the lord who first received the sword offereth the price of it, and having thus redeemed it, receiveth it from off the altar by the Dean of Westminster, and draweth it out of the scabbard, and carries it naked before

Her Majesty during the rest of the solemnity.' Lord Melbourne was the sword-bearer at the last coronation, and the price of the redemption of the sword was, as was always customary, one hundred shillings.

Of gorgeous swords which are not so much weapons as settings for precious stones, the most valuable in England is said to be the one presented by the Egyptians to Lord Wolsley, and valued at £2000; but this sum is comparatively little for a bejewelled sword if the value of the sword brought over to Europe by the late Shah of Persia on his first visit—namely, £10,000—can be taken as a standard of what a diamond-hilted weapon ought to cost. Those who can recall that wonderful sabre will be somewhat sceptical about the existence of the Gaikwar of Baroda's gorgeous blade, which is supposed to be worth more than twenty swords of equal beauty and value to the Shah's; but it is popularly supposed that the diamonds, rubies, and emeralds with which it is thickly encrusted bring up its value to about £220,000, which at four per cent. would represent an income of almost £9000 a year, and renders the possession of such a sword something more than a mere luxury.

#### AFTER TEN YEARS.

If I could make a poem that was full of life and wit,  
Of freshness and of force enough to make a brilliant hit;  
To stereotype for ages the lovely and the true,  
And eclipse all previous efforts, I'd make it, love, for you.

If I could paint a picture with a pencil new inspired,  
Which in every part and pigment was unfeignedly  
admired,  
And sweet as morning baby from her bath of silver  
dew,  
I'd paint that witching comeliness personified in you.

If I could write a novel with a wonder-working pen,  
Its situations striking, and its heroes living men,  
I would not have to rack my brains nor search the  
world through  
To find the noblest heroine: she's found, my love, in  
you.

If I could do a valiant deed which all the world would  
praise—  
A deed to bring to life again the old heroic days—  
I would not value honours, the many or the few;  
I'd feel myself ennobled by doing it for you.

A. MACDONALD.

#### \* \* TO CONTRIBUTORS.

1st. All communications should be addressed 'To the Editor, 339 High Street, Edinburgh.'

2d. For its return in case of ineligibility, postage-stamps should accompany every manuscript.

3d. To secure their safe return if ineligible, ALL MANUSCRIPTS, whether accompanied by a letter of advice or otherwise, should have the writer's Name and Address written upon them IN FULL.

4th. Poetical contributions should invariably be accompanied by a stamped and directed envelope.